

Denmark - International Benchmarking of the Danish Hospital Sector

A recent international benchmarking study, made by the Danish Ministry of Health and Prevention, compares the Danish hospital sector with that of other countries in the following four fields:

- Health systems and health status;
- Expenditure, personnel, capacity and activity;
- The patient and hospital service; and
- Use of resources and quality of care.

The benchmarking indicators relate primarily to resources, process, services and effects. For the comparison, seven European countries have been selected: Sweden, Norway, Finland, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and France. In addition, an OECD average is presented where possible. The countries have been selected primarily on the basis of the fact that they are countries with which Denmark naturally compares itself due to geographical closeness and comparable living standards.

Generally, the benchmarking study shows that the Danish hospital sector performs well in most areas compared with the seven countries and with the average of the OECD countries. With respect to Denmark, it should be underlined that access to healthcare is good with relatively short waiting times, and that Denmark has the lowest proportion of citizens who experience unmet needs for medical examination among the countries benchmarked. Moreover Denmark performs relatively more surgical procedures on inpatients than the other countries in the comparison and the average of the OECD, and average length of stay is lower than most at 3.5 days.

Danish patients have well-developed rights and out of the eight countries in the comparison, it is only Denmark that has a generally extended free choice of hospital after one month waiting time.

On the other hand Danes have shorter life expectancy than citizens in the other seven countries and the average of the OECD countries. This is due among other things to lifestyle factors for example high consumption of tobacco and alcohol. Finally, in Denmark, hospital expenditure accounts for 4.3 percent of GDP, whereas the average for the OECD countries is 3.1 percent and between 2.8 – 4.1 in the other seven countries in the comparison. After Norway, Denmark has the highest number of full-time employees at public hospitals per 1,000 population.

More information about the study (in English) can be found on: www.sum.dk Asger Hansen

Published on : Sun, 1 Aug 2010